

# Advertising Age

Crain's International Newspaper of Marketing • In Two Sections • Section 1 • \$2.00 a copy

## LAST MINUTE NEWS

### Reynolds kills Uptown

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.—R.J. Reynolds Tobacco said late Friday it's canceling the planned test of controversial Uptown menthol cigarettes, a new brand targeted to black smokers. In a statement, RJR said the test planned for early February in Philadelphia couldn't be accurate because of "the unfair and biased attention the brand had received."

Uptown had been under fire from U.S. Secretary of Health & Human Services Louis Sullivan and several health, black-interest and anti-smoking groups.

"Our intentions in test-marketing Uptown... have been misconstrued and misrepresented by the anti-smoking lobby," said Peter Hault, RJR exec VP-marketing. "Our sole purpose, plainly and simply, was to market a cigarette among smokers who currently buy competitive products."

"We regret that a small coalition of anti-smoking zealots apparently believes that black smokers are somehow different from others who choose to smoke and must not be allowed to exercise the same freedom of choice available to all other smokers. This represents a loss of choice for black smokers and a further erosion of the free-enterprise system."

FCB/Leber Katz Partners, New York, was handling the brand.

### Pepsi scores with Montana

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz.—Pepsi-Cola Co. told bottlers last weekend at their annual convention here that the company has signed San Francisco 49ers quarterback Joe Montana to an expanded contract for Diet Pepsi. The national campaign breaks in the first quarter of Super Bowl XXIV on CBS Jan. 28. Mr. Montana has served as a Diet Pepsi pitchman before, most recently in local spots for Pepsi-Cola West. No creative details were disclosed. Also, Los Angeles Laker Earvin "Magic" Jackson will star in a new network and spot TV effort for Mandarin Orange Slice, themed "The magic is Mandarin." BBDO Worldwide, New York, handles.

### FDA proposal is strict

WASHINGTON—The Food & Drug Administration's proposed guidelines for health claims on food labels are far more stringent than the advertising community hoped. The 87-page pro-

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## INSIDE

**Ready for Moscow** P. 16  
McDonald's prepares for next week's opening in Moscow.

**Travel talks** P. 20  
Travel industry executives discuss market changes at a recent Ad Age roundtable.

**Life goes on** P. 44  
Fallon McElligott maintains creative drive without founder Tom McElligott.

# America's oat bran craze on the wane

## Controversial research fuels product fallout

By Julie Liesse and Judann Dagnoli

The controversy over oat bran's power to lower cholesterol levels, triggered by a new scientific study last week, may hasten a shakeout already under way among oat bran products.

"What it did is confirm my suspicions about the oat bran market fading," said a Chicago retailer. "We're in a position to start weeding out some oat brans, and this gives me ammunition."

But the controversy won't have an impact on the general health food craze, and consumers may simply switch from oat bran to other brans, sources say.

Hardest and soonest to be hit will be fadish products such as oat bran beer, industry analysts believe.

But even General Mills and Quaker Oats Co. could feel some sales fallout from the study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that triggered the debate last week.

Cereal leader Kellogg Co., which has less of a stake in oat bran products, likely will feel the slightest impact from the study.

The research concluded that oat bran is no more effective in lowering a person's cholesterol level than other fiber foods, including refined wheat flour.

In other words, oat bran's impact on cho-

lesterol levels could be coming from the fact that it's a dietary substitute for high-cholesterol foods, and other substitutes could work equally well, the study indicates.

On Wall Street, both General Mills and Quaker stock dropped immediately after the study's release.

"General Mills is the most exposed" with the oat bran study, said County NatWest Securities analyst Timothy Ramey, because "they have the shakiest claim to volume growth."

Arthur Schulze, General Mills vice chairman, disagreed.

"Sure, oat bran has brought some news to (Continued on Page 54)

## Super Bowl: an ad snore



Clever spots, yes.  
Spectacular,  
magical... no

By Bob Garfield

Let's hope the game is good.

The hyper-hyped Super Bowl advertising, it turns out, will not meet America's publicity-generated expectations. At \$700,000 per 30 seconds—and cumulatively tens of millions of dollars in production costs—you'd have anticipated something magical.

But mainly all we'll get is clever, lots of clever and entirely unmagical TV commercials. Last year's 3-D Diet Coke spot and Anheuser-Busch's "Bud Bowl I" took the game to unprecedented heights of marketing spectacle, creating precisely the commercial-break dilemma advertisers sought. A sneak preview at this year's most pre-publicized commercials reveals little to strain your bladder over.

In terms of power and drama, the 1990 crop is the advertising equivalent of a 38-6 Super Blowout: a lot of interesting action but not much to talk about.

The sole exception is Coca-Cola Co.'s "Hilltop Reunion," a snarky exercise in nostalgia and sentimentality, a mawkish and manipulative faux celebration of world brotherhood, a cheap device for stirring viewer emotion.

And a terrific one.

McCann-Erickson Worldwide, New York, begins with the basic, clever Super Bowl idea: revisiting the Italian site of 1971's (Continued on Page 56)



Coca-Cola Co.'s "Hilltop Reunion" spot is irresistible, especially since it includes children this time.

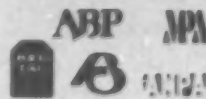
Michael J. Fox sets out on his latest Diet Pepsi adventure, which this time takes place at the opera.

# Apple slump puts brake on ad spending plans

## Univisa returns to broadcast

## IN THIS ISSUE

Vol. 61, No. 4—**CHN/US JOURNAL AD** (ISSN 0001-8988) is published weekly by Grain Commerce Extension Inc. at 740 Pearl Street, Chicago, Ill. 60611-1882. Second-class postage paid at Chicago and additional mailing offices. Send address changes to **ADVERTISING AG**, Circulation Department, 986 E. Jefferson, Detroit, Mich. 48207. \$2.00 a copy, \$76 a year, \$127 two years. Add \$126 per year for air delivery to Europe & Middle East. Add \$64 for surface mail to all other foreign countries. **WILLIAM STRONG**, VP-circulation; **DAVE KELLEY**, circulation manager. Four weeks' notice required for change of address. Address all subscription correspondence to Circulation Department, Advertising AG, 986 E. Jefferson, Detroit, Mich. 48207. 1-800-988-9870. Microfilm copies are available from University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. Microfiche copies are available from Bell & Howell, Micro Photo Division, 222 Michigan Rd., Woodbridge, Ohio 44449. AD AG available for electronic retrieval on the NEXUS® Service, Mead Data Central, Inc., P.O. Box 933, Dayton, Ohio 45405 (800 227-4908).



# SPECIAL REPORT

## Automotive Marketing

Edited by Pat Gray Thomas

- Fantasy shopping**.....S-2  
Annual auto show extravaganzas allow carmakers to gauge reactions, build lists.
- Speedy results**.....S-6  
Winning on Sunday to sell on Monday is drawing more marketers to motor sports.
- Prospecting for a rich vein**.....S-10  
Tony events, parties mark lifestyle marketing increases at upscale carmakers.
- It's all in how you say it**.....S-14  
Is Chevy America's heartbeat or "a declining entry-level brand"? Garfield reviews slogans.



## BAROMETER

Take a number

### Top auto advertisers

| Company              | 1989 Jan.-Sept. spending | % chg. |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| General Motors Corp. | \$823,457.4              | +1%    |
| Ford Motor Co.       | 323,002.3                | +32    |
| Chrysler Corp.       | 287,482.3                | +2     |
| Toyota Motor Corp.   | 177,983.1                | +43    |
| Nissan Motor Co.     | 142,515.3                | +37    |
| Honda Motor Co.      | 137,278.9                | +20    |
| Mazda Motor Co.      | 106,774.4                | +47    |
| Hyundai Group        | 106,778.4                | +14    |
| Volkswagen AG        | 95,388.4                 | -7     |
| Subaru-Suzuki AG     | 95,945.3                 | +15    |

Note: Dollars are in thousands. Figures include nine measured media only.  
SOURCE: LIA/Arbitron Multi-Media Service

### Take the pulse

General Motors probably will stay inside when it replaces the retiring Roger Smith this year, but what if market share dips below 30? 25? 20? What if the only solution is to go outside for an heir to the GM throne? Here are some names we'd like to see GM consider:

**Bo Schenckler**...The former Michigan football coach could have the Detroit Tigers on solid footing for the pennant drive, so why not bring him in and see if Bo knows Firebirds, too?

**Michael Moore**...The ultimate in turning-the-other-cheek: Hire the director of the wicked "Roger & Me" documentary haunting GM in theaters around the U.S. Then again, maybe not.

**Hal Finney**...That voice, that voice. If ever there was a calm, settling, convincing front man to run rings around the contenders, Saturn's agency head is it.

**Lee Iacocca**...Go for the trifecta—he perked up Ford; he's the savior of Chrysler; what better way to wrap it up than re-righting the stumbling giant?

**Ralph Nader**...Hey, the Corvair controversy is long forgotten and the consumer is always right. Right? Nah.

## Blasting through ad clutter

### Carmakers finding there's more than TV to draw consumers

By Raymond Serafin

**T**oo many cars, not enough buyers. The essential problem facing automakers can be reduced to that simple equation. That equation has a corollary: Too many cars, too many ad messages.

The surplus of cars and trucks has created a clutter of automotive advertising, a factor that's rapidly changing the rules for marketers. Messages that don't stand out or lack consistency are lost.

"All media channels are cluttered, but sometimes a whisper of the right phrase at the right time can be convincing," says Brent Bissell, senior VP-manager, McCann-Erickson Direct, Troy, Mich., which handles General Motors Corp.'s Buick division.

Wooing today's customer isn't easy. "We have the toughest, smartest consumers we've ever had, and they have more choices than at any time in history," says Laurel Cutler, vice-chairman of FCB/Leber Katz Partners, New York, and VP-consumer affairs at Chrysler Corp. There are more than 40 car and light-truck brands, offering by some counts more than 600 models. Customers are not willing to stay married to a single brand

forever," says Ms. Cutler.

Among the trends emerging to meet these changes: risk-taking in creative and media approaches to break through the clutter; increased use of non-traditional tactics such as direct marketing with videos and event sponsorships; and greater coordination between different marketing functions to achieve a consistent look and message.

The so-called "overcapacity" problem has arrived despite the best five-year sales results in the industry's history. Sales of new cars and trucks topped 15 million units a year for four straight years until 1989, when they still reached about 14.7 million (a projection based on sales through Dec. 10), still a far better year than the last recession, which saw sales dip to 10.5 million in 1982.

The situation "is like musical chairs in reverse," says Bob Reuschle, senior VP-director of media for J. Walter Thompson USA, Detroit, which handles Ford Motor Co.'s Ford Division. When the music stops, no marketer wants to be the one hanging on to unsold vehicles.

If a sales slump that began in October continues much longer, overcapacity may worsen. "We see the sales downturn lasting at least through the middle of the year [calen-

dar 1990]," says Thomas O'Grady, president of Integrated Automotive Resources, a Wayne, Pa., marketing consultancy. National Automobile Dealers Association forecasts a 7% sales decline in 1990, to 13.7 million cars and trucks.

Agencies and media are watching to see if other auto marketers will follow the lead of General Motors Corp., which is responding to declining sales by cutting an estimated \$80 million out of its 1990 ad budget.

The economics of the situation demand that automakers spend more to market their vehicles, says Mr. Reuschle; it is far more expensive to shut down a factory.

The experience of the past five years supports that view. New entries such as Acura, Daihatsu, Hyundai, Infiniti, Lexus, Range Rover, Sterling and Yugo have poured out sizable introductory marketing budgets, gained a bigger foothold, and marketing spending for existing models has soared to meet the new competition.

"There's no question spending by all the auto companies is up substantially," says Michael Drexler, exec VP-media at Bozell, New York, agency for Chrysler's corporate advertising and Chrysler/Plymouth divi-

(Continued on Page S-8)